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TO RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHDC
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INFO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC 8652

UNCLAS VIENNA 002486

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FOR OSD NATO POLICY (ALLDREDGE) AND JCS J5 EUROPE (LTC
BROECKER)

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [PREF](#) [PHUM](#) [PREL](#)

SUBJECT: NOTE VERBAL FROM AUSTRIAN MFA REGARDING IRAQI
ASYLUM SEEKER

¶1. (U) Embassy has received a Diplomatic Note (Text in para 3) from the Austrian Foreign Ministry with a request for information regarding the terms and conditions of employment for translators employed by U.S. military forces in Austria. The request arises from the case of an unnamed applicant for asylum in Austria, who apparently has argued that her previous employment with U.S. forces would place her in jeopardy, were she to return home. Note: The Note does not ask for information regarding the applicant. End Note.

¶2. (U) Embassy requests DoD assistance in responding to the note as quickly as possible. Embassy will send an interim response (text in para 4) to the Defense Ministry on September 26.

¶3. (U) Begin Text of Austrian Foreign Ministry Diplomatic Note of 27 April, 2007:

(Complimentary opening)... would like to inform it (e.g., the Embassy) of the following letter by the Independent Federal Asylum Office of the Republic of Austria, kindly asking for a response.

A female asylum applicant who appealed in an ongoing asylum procedure claims that she is an Iraqi national who had lived in Baghdad until the end of 2004 and had worked as an interpreter for the U.S. Army. In the process of verifying the necessary background facts and in order to assess the validity of the statements of the applicant, the Independent Federal Asylum Office solicits answers to the following questions:

¶1. What kind of contractual arrangement exists between interpreters hired by the U.S. Army? Does any such agreement rest on a (written) contractual basis? Does the U.S. Army issue a work contract? The female asylum applicant maintains that she did not receive a work contract and that she had worked (as an interpreter) without any contractual basis for the U.S. Army.

¶2. Do the interpreters used by the U.S. Army receive a formal certificate or a (U.S.) identification card? The applicant claims that she had received such an ID which she had to wear (visibly) around her neck and hand in the evening.

¶3. What are the criteria for remuneration of the interpreters used by the U.S. Army? What is this amount? The applicant claims she received the honorarium at the end of the month in cash (USD) against counter-signature at the cashier.

¶4. What information do the interpreters get regarding their

employer? Do the interpreters know the names/identities of their immediate supervisors? Does the U.S. keep any records, name lists, etc. of interpreters who worked for it?

Complimentary closing.

End text.

14. (U) Begin Text of Embassy interim response:

(Complimentary opening)... wishes to inform the Ministry that it has transmitted the questions contained in the Note to the Department of Defense and will respond as soon as an answer is received.

The Embassy would suggest that direct contact between the relevant officials of the Embassy of Austria in Washington, D.C. and the Department of Defense would be an additional appropriate channel for the pursuit of these inquiries.

With respect to the employment of any specific individual, the Embassy regrets to inform the Ministry that it would not be possible to provide details regarding that person's employment status for reasons of personal privacy protection and security.

Complimentary closing.

Embassy of the United States of America
Vienna, September 25, 2007.

End Text.

McCaw